

will have an overwhelming vote in both Houses—well, the House already passed it by an overwhelming vote. I think in the Senate we will, as well. I urge colleagues to be patient and not try to pass everything on their legislative agenda in the next two days.

Let us work together and finish the unfinished appropriations bills, the continuing resolution, do it responsibly. Again, I thank my colleague from Oregon and my colleague from Arizona for their willingness to be at least flexible enough for some of us who had concerns about their amendments. Perhaps we can get that resolved.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 5 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. I want to tell the Senator from Oklahoma that we very much appreciate his involvement in this. I only asked for 5 additional minutes because I want to go back to negotiating with him and his staff on it. As you know, Senator KENNEDY has done yeoman work on this and has been very involved in this as well. I think we are going to have good input and involvement on both sides of the aisle if we try to finish it up.

I think it is important that the Senate and the country understand that what we are talking about is ensuring that straightforward, honest conversation could take place between doctors, nurses, chiropractors, therapists, and their patients. That is all we are talking about here—information, and those honest, straightforward discussions. Right now, because of these gag clauses, that kind of communication so often can't take place. That is not right. That is what we are going to try to change.

Mr. President, I thank the Senate for the additional time. I yield the floor.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, September 26, the debt stood at \$5,198,325,061,997.28.

One year ago, September 26, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,953,251,000,000.

Five years ago, September 26, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,638,501,000,000.

Ten years ago, September 26, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,109,293,000,000. This reflects an increase of more than \$3 trillion

(\$3,089,032,061,997.28) during the 10 years from 1986 to 1996.

#### TRIBUTE TO HOWARD GREENE

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, last week the Senate took a few moments to pass a resolution honoring the service of Sergeant-at-Arms Howard Greene, who is leaving after a 28 year career with this body. I was away from the Senate floor during the discussion of that resolution, but I did not want this Congress to adjourn without having had the opportunity to share my appreciation for Howard Greene's service to the Senate, and for his personal friendship during my tenure here.

Mr. President, much of the important work which we do here in the Senate could not be accomplished without the dedication of the professional staff members who serve the Senate, and Howard Greene has been the consummate professional. His love for the Senate; his keen understanding of its workings and its constitutional role; his discretion and his tact, have gone hand-in-hand with Howard Greene's fundamental decency and sense of public service to make him one of the Senate's greatest assets for many, many years. I doubt that there is a single Member of this body who has not benefited from Howard's counsel, his industry, his knowledge of the Senate, or his friendship. I know that I have gained a great deal from each.

I am especially proud that Howard is a fellow Delawarean, and have always believed that his sense of public service embodies the bipartisan tradition that is the hallmark of our State. As Sergeant-at-Arms, or Secretary to the majority, or in any of the roles he has undertaken during his long career here, Howard has been a source of wisdom and assistance, counsel and comfort to all Senators, Republican and Democrat alike. He has been a fundamental believer in the idea that once the election is over, we are all public servants, and he has worked tirelessly to enable us to fulfill the trust that the people of our States have placed in us.

Mr. President, the halls of Congress are filled with idealistic young people who have come to Washington hoping for a career in public service. They are the lifeblood of this institution, and are the democratic system's hope for the future. For any of those young people searching for a model of integrity, commitment, and public spiritedness upon which to base their career, I would suggest that they look to the long and distinguished career of Howard Greene.

We will miss him a great deal. And I will always be proud to call him my friend.

#### RETIRING SENATORS

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, these last few days mark the last that we will have the pleasure of working with some of the most talented and dedi-

cated Senators to have served in the U.S. Senate. That's because 13 of our finest Members will be retiring this year.

Recently, former Senator Warren Rudman wrote that "As a Senator I had enjoyed sitting down with colleagues like George Mitchell, SAM NUNN, BILL BRADLEY, JOE BIDEN, and TED KENNEDY and saying, 'We have a problem here—let's find a way to solve it.' They were Democrats, to the left of me politically, but just because we saw things differently I didn't question their morality or their patriotism. I didn't come to Washington to cram things down people's throats or to have people cram anything down my throat. I thought the essence of good government was reconciling divergent views with compromises that served the country's interests."

All of the Senators retiring at the end of this Congress have set their moral compasses in the direction of compromises to best serve the country's interests. In doing so, they have served their constituents, the U.S. Senate and the Nation well.

They understood that the arbitrary labels many are so insistent to place on each other, in the end, fall short and are inadequate to describe an individual's commitment to country. That in fact, to weigh a life, a community's future or a country's needs, a different type of scale is required.

In a pluralistic society such as ours, there are many ways to confront a problem and arrive at a solution. These fine Senators recognized that their job was to reach a principled position amidst all of these often conflicting choices. Henry Kissinger put it another way saying, "The public life of every political figure is a continual struggle to rescue an element of choice from the pressure of circumstance."

They saw that the preoccupation with these labels is what grips us in gridlock. And that paralysis can cripple a nation's ability to solve its problems and move forward. With their fine guidance we have been able to move beyond gridlock on issues of great importance to the everyday lives of all Americans from health care reforms to important budget and spending questions, energy, immigration, the elderly, and judicial matters.

When judging the choices they've made, I believe history will look back on their service with great respect and admiration. Over and over again, when confronted with conflict or when called upon for leadership, they insisted that their decisions answer the larger questions: Will it stand the test of time for our country? Will our country gain strength from this decision? Time and again, their guidance has resulted in policies that have come to define our country and the common vision we hold as a nation.

In closing, Mr. President, I want to extend my personal thanks to Senators SAM NUNN, NANCY KASSEBAUM, HOWELL HEFLIN, DAVID PRYOR, CLAIBORNE PELL,